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MUSICAL INTERVIEWING.

OUR institutions are becoming more and more "Americanised," not in a democratic sense alone. The press is taking its tone from, and adopting the methods of transatlantic journalism. This change, as we all know, began years since with the appearance of short paragraphs devoted to personal gossip, and often to personal impertinences. I once met an American lady, who said to me: "I can't read your papers." Asked to give a reason, she replied: "They are dry. I want to be told about people. 'Men, not measures,' is my motto." Well, we are fast remedying all that, despite the fact that Justice fulminates against the "Society journals," which are assiduously read, no doubt, by her judges.

Lately, another step has been taken, and we have acclimatised interviewing and the interviewer; even the "proper" *Daily News*, seduced, perhaps, by the lively *Pall Mall Gazette*, giving the sanction of its countenance to the new practice. Let none of us be indiscriminate in condemnation, for interviewing, judiciously carried on, has its uses. In effect, what is it but a means of conveying to the public the personal opinion on interesting subjects of men who are supposed to speak with authority? The *Daily News* has recently interviewed Mr. Gye, Mr. Arthur Chappell, and Sir Arthur Sullivan, with regard to matters of which they are well able to judge. Not only a readable column was the result, but, in its way and of its kind, a valuable column. Without doubt, interviewing may be abused—perhaps I should say it is extremely liable to abuse. The operation demands careful treatment for the avoidance of offence against good taste, but when entrusted to discreet hands, it has much capacity for good.

During my recent tour in America, I encountered various examples of the interviewer, but only one of whom, with reference to the foregoing remarks, I need give particulars as showing with how much precaution and courtesy the best American papers discharge what public opinion imposes upon them as a duty. Immediately after my arrival in a certain city I was told that a gentleman representing an important journal desired a few minutes conversation, with a view to the publication of an article. It was for me to decide whether I would accept an interview or not. I accepted, and, at a stated time, met the gentleman—whom now I happily reckon amongst my friends—at a place agreed upon. In this instance, there were no formal questions for the interviewed person to answer, while the ready, and often

blundering, pen of the stenographer keeps pace. My interviewer and I simply conversed on certain subjects in an ordinary and informal manner, he naturally leading the discussion, but making no parade of note-book and pencil. Next morning, the musical readers of my friend's journal were not enlightened as to the colour and length of my hair, whether I had a cast in the eye or a club foot, how much I weighed, what I thought of America, or the estimated value of my jewellery (if any). They read only a very accurate and well-written paper, setting forth the opinions I had given on matters of interest; personalities of an offensive or even embarrassing kind being entirely absent. Here, as it seems to me, was interviewing carried to the point of a fine art, against which it is not possible to raise the smallest objection. But cases of this kind are rather the exception than the rule in America. Once on the trail of a person whom it is necessary to catch and turn inside out for the amusement of the public, the American reporter hunts like a sleuth hound. Nothing stops him. "Locks, bolts and bars soon fly asunder," and he stands ultimately in the presence of his victim, armed with the terrible instrument of his profession. He is not very scrupulous, I am sorry to say. His principles are those of the estimable parent who, when dying, remarked to his son, "Get money, my boy; honestly, if you can, but, anyhow, get it." It is this elasticity of method, which makes the interviewer formidable. Refuse him an audience, and he will, perhaps, imagine one certain not to be pleasant reading. The only sagacious course is to lie to, as soon as he heaves in sight, haul down the flag, and let him come on board.

No one should suppose that the interviewed is always a victim, and the interviewer, in his eyes, a detestable and inevitable nuisance. Musical artists, many of them, know better, and would imagine the edifice of their popularity tottering to its fall did they not receive the customary journalistic attention. They would bitterly lament the absence of the pushing person with the note-book; especially as he can be used to very great advantage by an adept at the craft. The interview is, for the interviewed, not only a cheap advertisement, but one impossible of appearance in any other form. It takes its colour from the personality, and is so flexible that it can be made to assume any shape that the individual concerned thinks bewitching. Let me give an example.

America boasts among her artistic children, a lady named Emma Abbott, who once, I remember, appeared on the stage of Covent Garden Theatre. Miss Abbott is now the head of a travelling opera



company in the States, and, there is reason to believe, enjoys a fair run of good fortune in that capacity. Of her present merits as a singer I know nothing. Her troupe were in Salt Lake City and San Francisco at the same time with myself, but "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and as that, for me, was not the day of opera, I stayed carefully away from the performances. On one point, however, I can testify:—Miss Abbott plays the part of the interviewed excellently well. She has taken shrewd measure of her public, in the various localities within her circuit, and, as will be seen, lays herself out to catch their favour through the agency of the by no means unsuspecting interviewer. In San Francisco she had no reason to trouble much about "high art." With theatres given up to variety shows of the commonest kind, and with hardly any performances having elevated aims, San Francisco is a place for other agencies, such as Miss Abbott knows well how to employ. Hence the journalist began with a lively description of "luxurious apartments at the Baldwin," where he found that "Miss Abbott's pretty French maid, Jeannette, had just put her last dainty touch to the driving costume of the cantatrice." Would my lady readers like a description of the costume? Here it is: "She twirled a silvery, gray glove in her hand. She wore a beautiful driving dress. It was a symphony in gray. The skirt was silver-gray brocaded silk, with dark gray flowers on the pale-shaded ground. She wore a tight-fitting cloak, with a coachman's cape, made of black velvet, with embossed horse-shoes. The cloak was trimmed with a delicate pearly-gray chinchilla. Her bonnet was gray to match the dress. It had dark gray sprigs and fine silver lace made in Mdme. Vivot's most bewitching style. In her ears were hoops of silver, with a circlet of silver beads, and at her throat she wore a beautiful silver brooch." While the reporter was making this inventory, Miss Abbott stood with "a tiny-booted foot extended from beneath the folds of a beautiful gray skirt." Let not the innocent reader suppose that a serious purpose was wanting to all these details of costume. Miss Abbott knew what she was about, and had evidently determined to capture the San Franciscans through her wardrobe. Millinery, not music, became the topic of the interview.

"Look at these," said Miss Abbott, as, with sparkling eyes, she artlessly (O, guileless reporter!) tumbled dress after dress out of her trunks, and stood at last in triumphant admiration of her rich and costly wardrobe." But the lady—artless again—did not wish the costumes spoken about. Oh, no! Still, she would show them to the guileless reporter, particularly the *Traviata* dresses. "The first was pronounced by Worth, who cut it with his own hands, a dream of loveliness, and is of rose-coloured embossed velvet, embroidered with silver. The second dress was made by the Compagnie Lyonnaise, and is of pale blue surah, covered with Valenciennes lace. The third dress of white brocaded moire antique was cut by Pingat, Worth's

great rival. It is lavishly embroidered with pearls and chiselled velvet flowers, and Pingat pronounced it one of the handsomest dresses ever made." Ah! but the costumes in *Semiramide*! Guileless reporter, take your tongue—or is it your plug?—out of your cheek, and sharpen the pencil well. "Look at this!" said Miss Abbott. "It was designed by Mdme. Louise, the costumer of the Grand Opera-house, Paris. She makes all the dreamy, nebulous dresses of the French actresses. It is of the finest Oriental fabrics, hand-embroidered, with gold and silver." Ah! but the climax of your extravagance, Miss Abbott, what is it? Tell the guileless reporter. "The climax of my extravagance is displayed in the throne scene when I wear my gold and diamond crown. The crown is solid gold, lined with black velvet. The arches that bend over the top are decorated with filagree work and between the gold bands there are nine large diamonds." Now for the *bonne bouche*! "Of all my dresses I think the one made for me in Paris by Mdme. Rodrigues is the most beautiful. She gives a love of a fit. It is blue, chiselled velvet. The flowers seem to be sculptured in it. It is trimmed with cascades of Danicheff lace and bouquets of blush roses. It is exquisite." After this, what could San Francisco do? The town went to see the wardrobe.

Shall we in England ever come to the like? Save in the interest of laughter holding both his sides, let us hope not. Here we have interviewing reduced to the absurd. But let us discriminate all the same, and not because it has been abused condemn that which may be used.

JOSEPH BENNETT.

ROUMANIAN MUSIC.

BEFORE definitively making up my mind to write a paper for THE LUTE under the above heading, I was more than once impelled by certain troublesome and recurrent doubts to ask myself the question, "Is there, or has there ever been, such a thing as Roumanian Music?" It was a difficult question to answer, for more than one reason. In the first place there is unquestionably something about the songs sung and the dances played throughout the length and breadth of the Dacian lands (which comprise Bessarabia, the Bukovina and a considerable portion of Transylvania, as well as the Kingdom of Roumania Proper, whilom the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia) which reminds the discriminating ear of Turkish, Hungarian and Slavonic strains. This circumstance is readily to be accounted for by the fact that Dacia, for a thousand years past, if not more, has been an oppressed and down-trodden land, the favourite battle-ground of Eastern Europe, surrounded on all sides by warlike and rapacious neighbours, whose favourite recreation it was to overrun the "sweet and lovely country" (*scumpa țeară si frumoasă*), carry off its sons and daughters into slavery, and every now and anon, annex it altogether. The Roumanians of the Middle Ages, as well as

of a more modern epoch, although they frequently fought their invaders with great gallantry and resolution, were nearly always in a state of vassal-dom, writhing under the armed heel of some neighbour mightier than themselves. It is not to be wondered at that their successive conquerors made deep impressions upon their manners and customs, and even imparted various foreign flavours to their national music. That they retained their language—originally the “army Latin,” or *lingua franca*, commonly spoken in the foreign legions of the Roman Empire—(two of which colonised Dacia in the time of Trajan)—is an extraordinary illustration of the instinctive race conservatism exemplified in Western Europe by the Welsh, Scotch Highlanders, Bretons, Basques, and Swiss Roumanians. Of course, Hungarian, Polish, and Turkish occupations of Roumania forcibly introduced a large number of foreign words into the Dacian vernacular; indeed, when I first began to study Roumanian, exactly twenty years ago, *sub consule Cusa*, twenty-four per cent. of its total vocabulary consisted of Magyar, Slav, Turkish, and even Greek importations, the remaining seventy-six per cent. being of pure Latin origin. I may observe—for the fact is an interesting one, though it certainly has nothing to do with Roumanian music—that since Roumania practically shook off the Turkish yoke in 1866, her leading philologists—amongst them Prince Jón Ghica, her present representative, at the Court of St. James, Basil Alecsandri, her Poet Laureate and Minister in Paris, and Majorescu, formerly her Minister of Education—have been assiduously engaged in purifying the Roumanian tongue and ridding it of the “barbarous” idioms that had crept into it in the manner above indicated. Their efforts have been so far crowned with success that the *limbă romană* of to-day only contains about five words of alien origin in every hundred, retained in deference to popular convenience; and, freed from the cramping trammels of the Cyrillic alphabet, is as well-ordered and learnable a literary language as either of its first cousins, Italian or Spanish.

To return, however, to the subject of this paper. Ultimately I made up my mind that there *was* such a thing as Roumanian music—music, that is to say, which, despite its borrowed “tricks and manners” and frequent suggestions of Hungarian and Turkish influence, steadfastly displays certain melodic characteristics peculiar to itself, as distinctly recognisable, let us say, as the Magyar rhythm *alla zoppa*, (or scale with two superfluous seconds, a harmonic minor with a sharp fourth), or the fundamental droning fifth of the Celtic music. It is difficult to describe these characteristics intelligibly; that they exist I shall endeavour to demonstrate by one or two brief excerpts from Roumanian tunes of considerable antiquity. Such as it is, the music of Dacia is essentially, almost exclusively, melodic. Harmony does not enter into its being; it has never created a vocal duet, trio or part-song; its *horas* (*derivatur* chorus) are sung in unison, the time being

marked by the stamping of feet and swaying of bodies as the singers hold hands in a circle and revolve, like English village children, to the strains of “Here we go round the mulberry-bush.” Roumanian music, in common with that of all peoples who have suffered long and cruel subjugation, is for the most written in the minor scale. There are some exceptions; but they are of modern production, and owe their genesis, as I have ascertained, to gipsies, not to pure-blooded Dacians. These latter, by the way, in their patriotic anxiety to prove that emancipated Roumania is “up to time” in the gentler arts of civilisation, have taken to composing a vast amount of the weakest rubbish that ever put forward a claim to rank as vocal or instrumental music. Nothing more rickety or wishy-washy than the *doine* and *hore* of Scheletti, Ventura and Michael Poliso has ever been fabricated by the British drawing-room ballad manufacturer, whose capacity for uttering musical platitudes I had deemed unrivalled until I became acquainted with the works of the above-mentioned gentlemen.

The genuine Roumanian music, with its elementary accompaniment of a pedal-point that is not necessarily in tonic relation to the key of the melody it underlies and supports—with its rugged intervals, quaint flourishes or *agrèmens*, and plaintive semitonic wailings—is extremely ancient; so much so that if you ask a vocal peasant what might be the age of the ditty with which he cheers his bullocks on their ploughing way, it is ten to one that he will answer you, “*Acel cantic, Domnul?*” That song, my lord? It is as old as the Devil—a reply suggestive of a somewhat exceptional antiquity in a popular melody. Until very lately, none of the national airs had been notated; for their conservation from the fourteenth century, in some cases, down to the present day, Roumania has to thank her wandering minstrels (*lăotari*), who have transmitted them with perfect accuracy—so, at least, it is believed through generations innumerable of the “sons of Trajan” (*fii Trajanului*). These airs belong to three categories; *cantice batrineste*, that is, historical or legendary ballads; *doine*, love songs and elegies; *horas*, lively lyrics, much of the class that used to be popular in after-dinner circles when English society was convivial and chirpy, *i.e.*, stanzas with a chorus; the difference between the British and Roumanian lyric of this kind being that the burden of the former is sung, whilst that of the latter is danced. There is, moreover, a fourth sort of air, having some analogy to our Christmas Carol; it is called *colinda*, and is sung in unison by bands of children, on Christmas and New Year Eves, under the windows of the Boyars’ houses. Two of these *colinde*—“*Florile Dalbe*” (Strange Flowers) and “*Plugul*” (The Plough)—are of unknown antiquity, and very dear to the heart of every true Roumanian. A gentle melancholy runs through words and music alike; indeed, this is the case with all the genuine Roumanian songs and dances, whether their *tempi* be slow or rapid. During my long sojourns in Moldavia every now and anon I happened upon a *hora* of an unmistakably rollicking

character—"Am un leu" is a shining example of these exceptions to the rule—but on inquiring carefully into the origin of these cheerful airs I invariably found that they hailed from Transylvania, where the influence of Magyar musical joviality had been effectively brought to bear upon the languorous plaintiveness of the Rouman melodic method.

Of the *cantice batrineste* several that enjoy especial popularity deal with the predatory exploits of certain celebrated bandits (Heiduki) who flourished in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and are still looked up to by the Roumanian peasantry as heroes of only a thought less historical interest than Stephen the Great, Michael the Brave, and Vlad the Cruel. Village youths and maidens are never weary of listening to the wild adventures of Gianul, Stepan Boujor (Stephen the Poppy), Tunsul (the Shaven), Andrii Popa (Andrew the Priest), and Groza (the Terror) of whom they are accustomed to speak as *omeni buni* (worthy men), or *puii de zmei* (sons of giants). Gianul is to the Roumanian Legends what Robin Hood is to our own ballad lore. He robbed the rich to give to the poor, exhibiting extraordinary daring and ingenuity in the execution of his predatory feats. I have no idea how many verses there are in the celebrated song that bears his name and professes to chronicle his principal achievements. All I can say about it is that I have never succeeded in hearing the end of it, though I have listened to it, more than once, for an hour at a stretch. Probably the leading *laotari*, who are ready enough at improvisation, extemporise additional verses to this favourite ballad whenever they find their audience deeply attentive to their lays. Were any drawing-room vocalist to attempt the singing of the adventures of Robin Hood in a hundred and thirty-five verses or so at a London evening party he would of a certainty be voted the most intolerable bore that ever disgraced humanity; but I have never known "Gianul" to pall upon Roumanians of any social class, no matter at what dismal and unseemly length it was droned out by Nick the Moldavian or Gregory the Nightingale, Roumania's most accomplished minstrels in my salad-days—alas! long past.

Space considerations deter me from subjoining the whole of the Gianul melody, which consists of two distinct eight-bar *motivi* and a quaint seven-bar refrain, indescribably mournful in character. Here, however, is the first moiety of the air:—

CANTIC BATRINEST.—BALLAD: "GIANUL."



Of the *Doine*, or love-songs, it may with truth be said that their name is legion. Few of them, however—that is of the ancient, characteristic ones—are procurable in print, although every *laotar*—I had almost written, every Roumanian—knows them by heart, and Alecsandri, Eminescu, Bolintineanu, and other modern poets of Dacia have written beautiful words to them. The following air is generally sung in connection with Alecsandri's "Dorul," a lyric descriptive of the passion which Roumanians are wont to say they alone of all the Latin peoples can feel—a blending of regret, hope, pain, and love, alleged to be fatal (sooner or later) to those who experience it in all its fullness. To this class of tune there is always a second part, but no burden, as in the case of the *cantic batrinest*, or *hora*:—

DOINA.—"DORUL."



With a seven-bar excerpt from a *hora* which has been played, as I am assured, at every Roumanian wedding of Boyars or peasants from time immemorial—I have often heard Germans allude to it contemptuously as *Bären-Musik*, the sort of jig to which nobody but a bear is justified in dancing—I shall conclude my selection of specimens of Roumanian national airs. In former papers contributed to THE LUTE I have dealt at such length with the *laotari* and their musical feats that I will only venture to say a few words, on this occasion, about the instruments upon which these tunes are generally played. The violin and Pandean pipes take the melody in turns; the accompaniments are played upon a sort of guitar, upon the *ciombalan*, a thing of wood and wires, like an upright zither without a back, and upon an instrument shaped like a clarinet, but keyless, and pierced by half-a-dozen holes at most. Amongst the peasants this is used as a solo instrument, in both senses of the word *solo*, for it is the only one they have any skill in. In tone it somewhat resembles a bass flute, and I am not guilty of exaggeration, I believe, in saying that thousands of Roumanian shepherds and tillers of the soil play it—as well as it can be played. It "lends itself" very congenially to the execution of the popular *hora*—hight "The Tribute" for some mysterious reason which I have never been able to

discover—with which I crave my readers' permission to conclude this curiously imperfect sketch of Roumanian national music.

HORA. (BIRU) "THE TRIBUTE."



WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

FAMOUS FIRST NIGHTS.

II.—DER FREYSCHÜTZ.

CAROLINE BAUER dwells in her *Memoirs* on the immense popularity achieved by *Der Freyschütz* at Berlin where, immediately after its production, its songs and choruses used to be sung all over the town. Some persons, however, had better musical memories than others; and on one occasion an animated street row took place between an old gentleman who had begun Annchen's graceful solo and, not being able to continue it, had it finished for him by a small boy who happened to be passing at the time. The old gentleman accused the small boy of "robbing him of his opening"—much as Wagner, in his *Opera and Drama*, charges the lyrical composers of his time with "robbing the people of their songs."

It is said, too, that when the popularity of Weber's best known work was at its height in London a gentleman advertised in the papers for a servant who was unable to whistle the airs from *Der Freyschütz*. Fortunately or unfortunately, it is not necessary to take any such precaution in regard to the airs of contemporary operas. There is not the least probability, for instance, of any servant vexing his master's heart by whistling in his presence airs from *Savonarola* or from the *Canterbury Pilgrims*; nor is there much chance that melodies from M. Reyer's *Sigurd* or strains of any kind from the later operas of Wagner will take the fancy and catch the ear of footmen or grooms. The tuneful themes, however, in which *Der Freyschütz* abounds possess the truly Shakespearian merit of delighting alike the simple, natural man, and the man of education and refinement. No opera more popular in the broad sense of the word than *Der Freyschütz* has ever been produced; and unlike some other masterpieces, such as the *Marriage of Figaro*, the *Barber of Seville* and *William Tell*, it was received with enthusiasm by the first audience before which it was represented. This was at Berlin in 1821; and though in different capitals *Der Freyschütz* met with

different fortunes it may said in a general way to have carried the public everywhere by storm.

But though the production of *Der Freyschütz* on the stage of the Berlin Opera-house took place in 1821, the first idea of the work was conceived eleven years earlier. Weber, in the spring of 1810, was staying near Heidelberg with his friend Alexander von Dösch. He had just before been expelled—indeed ejected—from Stuttgart by orders of the King, who, having no further need of his services, had him suddenly arrested in the orchestra and taken to the frontier; and he can have been in no very happy condition of mind when Herr von Dösch rendered him the inestimable service of calling his attention to the story of *Der Freyschütz* in Apel's collection of tales. Dösch read the fascinating legend aloud; and Weber saw that he had at last found what he had long been seeking: a fit subject for a romantic opera. Such was Weber's enthusiasm that nothing would content him but to trace at once, with the assistance of Dösch, the scenario of the work which he had determined to compose. The preparation of the dramatic frame-work occupied the two friends all night, and the sun rose before they had quite completed it.

The composer having satisfied his first impulse, his ardour, for a time, cooled. He had at that moment on hand an opera, *Abu Hassan*, which it was necessary to finish without delay. Soon afterwards he produced *Sylvana*. Then, the post of musical director at Prague having been offered to him, he went to Bohemia where, during a sojourn of some years, he may well have inspired himself with the native melodies of the land; though it would be difficult in *Der Freyschütz*, or in any other of Weber's operas, to find direct traces of Czech themes. From Prague Weber passed to Dresden, and there established intimate relations with the poet, Kind, to whom he communicated his operatic project as sketched out half-a-dozen years before at Heidelberg. Kind was so delighted with the idea that he resolved to put it at once into form. For his libretto he was to receive the modest sum of thirty ducats. Weber, say his biographers, paid the money in advance; and the poet at once set to work. The "book" was finished in a few days, and Weber forthwith began to compose the music. He was at this time deeply in love with the young girl whom he was afterwards to marry; and it needs no psychologist to tell us whether or not his condition of mind was favourable to poetic work. Every day a letter reached him from Prague where his betrothed resided. He had made her acquaintance at Frankfort, where she filled the part of *Sylvana* in his opera of that name. But he was at that time in love with Margaret Lange, whom he had known at Stuttgart; and it was only when he became musical director at Prague that he thought seriously of Caroline Brandt, and got her engaged by his new director. Not that he was even then in love with Caroline. A singer named Theresa Brunetti had gained his heart; and it was not until some time after Caroline's arrival at Prague that Weber, worried and distracted, it is said, by the

jealousy of Theresa, devoted himself to the woman who was henceforth to occupy him exclusively.

"I found when I got back to the house," wrote Weber, one day to Caroline Brandt, "the first act of my opera. It pleases me much. The poem will be very interesting and at the same time terrible; but do not be alarmed, it ends well. Kind hopes to have finished his libretto in a fortnight. I will then have it copied without delay, and will send it to you to see if you like it. I have my doubts, for you are very difficult in regard to everything which concerns your king. You always want something extraordinary for him. My poem, however, will be extraordinary. Judge of it from this. The devil is introduced under the features of the Black Huntsman; bullets are cast at midnight in the wolf's glen, and millions of phantoms assist at this operation. Hoo! Hoo!"

Kind kept his word. On the 25th of February he sent Weber the second act; on the 3rd of March the third and last; so that altogether the libretto of *Der Freyschütz* was completed in less than ten days. Weber now wrote once more to his betrothed, giving her a full account of the book. "An old gamekeeper has resolved to give his daughter to one of his huntsmen, who will succeed him in his post. The prince has nothing to say against this determination; only there is an old custom, by which a new keeper, before receiving his appointment, must show himself a perfect shot. Now it happens that the huntsman preferred by the young girl, Max, who is considered a perfect shot, always misses the mark during the time preceding the formal trial. Reduced to despair, he gives himself up to Caspar, another huntsman, a rascal who has dealings with the devil, and who also wishes to marry the keeper's daughter. Caspar casts at night in the wolf's glen seven magic bullets, of which six will reach the mark, while the seventh belongs to the devil. The last is to kill the young girl; and, unable to survive his loss, Max will kill himself—such at least is Caspar's conclusion. But Heaven has decided otherwise. Agatha falls, but only from fear, and it is Caspar who, struck by Max's bullet, serves as victim to Satan. 'Why?' you will ask me. The piece will tell you. Be content to know for the present that everything ends for the best. I know that you will not understand much of this, and that you will, perhaps, not be able to form any idea of it. But I have only given you this sketch as a foretaste of the poem which you will soon read for yourself."

A few days afterwards Weber sent the poem to his betrothed, and it was lucky that he did so; for Caroline, with her knowledge of the stage, was able to suggest one or two important improvements which, doubtless, contributed to the success of the work. In the original text, the opera opened with two scenes between Agatha, Anne and the Hermit. These expository scenes are said to have rendered the story clearer. But being of quite an ordinary character, they would have, as Caroline Brandt pointed out, the effect of cooling the imagination of the public, which could not fail to

be excited by the romantic character of the overture.

"Cut out these scenes," she wrote. "Strike into popular life from the very beginning of this popular opera. Believe me. Begin at once with the scene of the inn."

Baron Max Maria von Weber, son of the composer, points out, in his biography of his father, that the part of Anne was written specially for Caroline Brandt; as that of Constance, in the *Seraglio*, was written by Mozart for his future wife, Constance Weber, own cousin to the composer of *Der Freyschütz*; "and it is doubtless," he adds, "to this association and this coincidence that the special admiration entertained by Weber for the *Seraglio* must be attributed. 'Mozart,' he was in the habit of saying, 'might, if he had lived, have composed ten other masterpieces like *Don Juan*, but he could not have produced a second *Seraglio*.'"

The letters addressed by Weber at this time, to his bride, show how much he was occupied with his other bride—the *Huntsman's Bride*, as the work afterwards to be known as *Der Freyschütz*, was originally called. But he was working at it only in imagination; and it was not until upwards of four months after he had received the libretto that he put the first note to paper. When, however, he had once begun, he worked at it longer than at any other of his operas.

Der Freyschütz was originally intended for the German Opera of Dresden, to which Weber was attached as musical conductor. But no proposition was made to him in reference to its production; and in May 1818, Count Brühl, superintendent of the royal theatres of Berlin, happening to visit Dresden, and hearing that Weber had an opera on hand, made him promise to bring it out in the Prussian capital. By the 6th of December, Weber was sufficiently advanced with his work to be able to write to Count Brühl that it would be all ready by the month of March following. The final numbers of *Der Freyschütz* were composed very quickly under pressure from the Count, who was anxious to receive the complete score. The last piece written by the composer is usually the first one performed; just as an author, after he has finished his book, completes it by a preface. Weber sketched his overture on the 22nd of February; and it appears from his diary that he scored it for the orchestra between the 7th and 11th of May. It was not, however, completed until the 14th of May, on which day the last note of *Der Freyschütz*, that is to say, the last note of the overture was written. During the month of June, Weber went over the entire work, and, says his son in his excellent biography, found it perfect. "So it appears," continues Baron Max Maria, "from the admirable manuscript which his widow afterwards presented to the Royal Library of Berlin, a manuscript in which no erasure, no correction can be discovered, but which is clear and pure like the work itself. The notes seem to have rolled and fixed themselves upon it by enchantment."

Weber was now married; and he arrived in

Berlin with his wife Caroline on 4th May, 1821, where they were hospitably received at the house of Meyerbeer's parents: Weber and Meyerbeer had, it will be remembered, studied together under the Abbé Vogler. On the 21st of May the rehearsals of *Der Freyschütz* were begun; and as they went on Weber made numerous alterations, sometimes remodelling entire scenes. This statement, borrowed from his son's biography, does not accord with the statement cited above; that when Weber had once finished *Der Freyschütz* he made no further corrections. The orchestral players, meanwhile, were delighted with the work—the best augury for success that a composer of true merit can desire.

It was on the sixth anniversary of a great battle that Weber with his *Der Freyschütz* was to meet and conquer the Berlin public; and on the evening of the 18th of June, 1821, the Royal Theatre was filled with an audience which included no small number of literary and musical celebrities. Benedict—the Sir Julius Benedict of our own time and of any time during the last fifty years—was present, with his young friend, Felix Mendelssohn, by his side; "who," says Baron Max Maria, "shouted aloud and applauded with enthusiasm." Benedict's cousin, too, Heinrich Heine, was there. He was then just twenty-one years of age; for, as he has himself observed, he ought to be looked upon as one of the first men of the century if only from the fact that he was born at its very beginning. The effect of the overture was magical, and, re-demanded with one accord, it was played a second time, to cause even greater enthusiasm on its repetition.

To all light, however, there is shadow, and as the performance went on, the partisans of Spontini, then all powerful at Berlin, were prodigal of their sneers. Every piece in the new opera made its mark. But when the work was finished the Spontinians, remembering the glories of so many heroic operas composed by their favourite master, asked calmly why so much fuss had been made about a simple vaudeville? Nevertheless, on the fall of the curtain, the audience, as a whole, were so impressed that no one left the house, which for some minutes resounded with shouts and cries of approval, until at last the composer appeared on the stage to receive congratulations in every form, including bouquets and crowns (greater novelties than they are now), and copies of verses which, we must suppose, had been improvised during the representation. The success was, in a word, unexampled.

"Returning home this evening," Weber wrote in his diary, "first representation of *Der Freyschütz*—received with incredible enthusiasm. The overture and the popular song re-demanded; out of 17 pieces, 14 applauded beyond measure. Everything for the best; I was recalled, and went forward to salute the public, accompanied by Frau Seidler and Fraulein Eunike, not being able to find the others. Verses and crowns fell at my feet. SOLI DEO GLORIA."

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

WE deeply regret to state that the illness from which Mr. J. W. Davison suffered during a considerable period terminated fatally at the York Hotel, Margate, on the 24th ult. With Mr. Davison departs a conspicuous figure in the world of English music, and one whose influence continued to be felt after he had withdrawn from the field of active work. Nearly forty years have passed since he began to write criticisms for the *Times*—first, as an assistant contributor, and then as the Thunderer's recognised musical editor. It says much for Mr. Davison that, during more than a generation, he filled his conspicuous place with credit and honour. Of course he had enemies—what man in a position of influence is without them?—but not the most unscrupulous could bring against him a worse charge than an occasional yielding to the generous impulses of a warm heart. If this were a fault, Mr. Davison was all the more loveable for it. He did his duty to his employers, and was faithful to his trust, erring only in being more lenient sometimes than stern justice allowed. His influence, throughout the period when the *Times* was a mighty power, could hardly be exaggerated; but much of it arose from his own personal qualities, such as a genial nature; remarkable insight into character; critical discernment which, *au fond*, was rarely at fault, and a literary style as clear as crystal and full of charm. His wonderful memory enabled him to store up all the musical facts of half a century, and to talk to him on such matters was better than consulting the finest reference library. The editor of *THE LUTE* bears this testimony to his departed friend with a full heart, calling to mind many kindnesses received when a helping hand was of value. May the gentle soul of James W. Davison for ever rest in peace.

In an unobtrusive way we contributed our fair quota towards the celebrations which, during the past month, marked the bi-centenary of the birth of Johann Sebastian Bach. The most important of these commemorative tributes was unquestionably the performance of the B minor Mass, on the 21st ult., at the Albert Hall, under the auspices of the Bach Choir. Here was at once the occasion of a vast and representative gathering and the rendering, in a manner certainly unequalled in this country, if not any other as well, of the most sublime and colossal work to which Bach's genius gave birth. Says Spitta, Bach's gifted biographer, "There is only one other work that can really be set by the side of the Mass in B minor," viz., Handel's *Messiah*. The comparison is as welcome as it is truthful; and when this worthy performance of one great masterpiece shall have been supplemented by that of the other which the Handel Festival will in due course supply, England may rest content with her contribution to the honours of a memorable double anniversary. Meanwhile, let us give all credit to the Bach Choir for their rising to the occasion, even as we hail with satisfaction the evidence of artistic progress that such a demonstration afforded. Mr. Oscar Beringer's successful and unique Concert at St. James's Hall stands conspicuously amid the Bach celebrations on a smaller scale. It was a "happy thought" to give a performance of Concertos by the master for one, two, three and four pianofortes. Apart from its novel character, the programme reflected a phase of Bach's unapproachable art that demanded illustration at such a time. Moreover, it was admirably carried out by Mr. Beringer, with the assistance of Messrs. Franklin Taylor, Walter Bache, and Alfred Richter.

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unless accompanied by the name and address of the sender.The EDITOR cannot undertake to return articles of which
he is unable to make use.

All business letters should be addressed to the PUBLISHERS.

Advertisements should reach the Office not later than the
20th in order to insure insertion in the issue of the month
current.

THE LUTE.

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 1885.

BACH AND HANDEL.

Two of the greatest composers who ever lived—
John Sebastian Bach and George Frederick Handel
—are now made, on all hands, the subject of bi-
centenary celebrations. In England and Germany
each master has his own separate commemora-
tion. But in Belgium the two have already been
honoured conjointly at a Concert, consisting exclu-
sively of works by Handel and by Bach; and, as
illustrating the same period, there were, perhaps,
good reasons for thus classing them together.
Music is such a modern art, that a composer born
two hundred years ago seems to belong to quite a
primitive period of musical history. Bach and
Handel are the most ancient composers whose
works are regularly heard in the concert-room; and,
though the period of their activity belongs only to
the early and middle part of the last century, they
are ranked by M. Gevaert, the learned director of
the Brussels Conservatoire, not as "classical" but as
"archaic" masters. Handel's operatic music, with
the exception of a few songs which are presented
from time to time by singers of Handelian tastes,
is in fact obsolete; and his admirable oratorios
(into which—to the confusion of those who hold that
music is an absolute language with a direct meaning
of its own—some portion of his operatic music has
passed) are orchestrated in obsolete fashion, and are
never presented in public but with new instrumenta-
tion. Bach's music, apart from his Fugues and a few
minor pieces written for the pianoforte (or rather the
harpsichord) and for the violin, is seldom rendered

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"LUTE" N^o 28.

This Part-Song is published separately. PRICE 2^d

"'T WAS A TRUMPET'S PEALING SOUND."

Part-Song.

Words by
M^{RS} HEMANS.

Music by
R. L. DE PEARSALL.

LONDON:

PATEY & WILLIS, 44, G^T MARLBOROUGH ST., W.

Marziale.

Soprano.
Alto.
Tenor.
Bass.
Piano.

'Twas a trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the
'Twas a trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the
'Twas a trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the
'Twas a trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the

Paynim's tow'r, And a Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him
Paynim's tow'r, And a Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him
Paynim's tow'r, And a Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him
Paynim's tow'r, And a Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him

wound. Cease a - while, cla - - - rion,

wound. Cease a - while, cease a - while, cease awhile, cease,

wound. Cease a - while, cease a - while, cease awhile, cease,

wound. Cease a - while, cease a - while, cease,

clarion wild and shrill! Cease! Let them hear the captive's voice, be *dim.*

cla - rion wild and shrill! Cease, cease a while! Let them hear the captive's voice, be *dim.*

clarion wild and shrill! Cease, cease! Let them hear the captive's voice, be *dim.*

clarion wild and shrill! Awhile cease, cease! Let them hear the captive's voice, be

still, be still! *Piu lento.* They are gone, they have all pass'd by!

still, be still! . . . *Piu lento.* They have all pass'd by! They are gone,

still, . . . be still! *Piu lento.* They are gone, they have all pass'd by! They are gone,

still, be still! *Piu lento.* They have all pass'd by! They

They in whose wars I had borne my part, They that I lov'd with a

... in whose wars I had borne my part, They that I lov'd with a

... in whose wars I had borne my part, They that I

... in whose wars I had borne my part,

pp

pp

bro-ther's heart, They have left me... here to die!

brother's heart, have left me here to die! Sound a gain, sound,

lov'd, They have left me here to die! Sound a gain, sound,

They that I lov'd, they have left me here to die, to die! Sound,

Sound again, *cres.* cla - - rion, clarion, pour thy blast!

... sound again, *cres.* sound, sound again, cla - rion, pour thy blast! Sound again,

... sound a gain, . . . *cres.* sound again, clarion, pour thy blast! Sound,

... sound again, sound a gain, clarion, pour thy blast! Sound again,

cres.

dim. rall - en - tan - do.

Sound, for the captive's dream of hope is past! 'Twas a

dim. rall - en - tan - do.

Sound, for the cap - - - tive's hope is past! 'Twas a

dim. rall - en - tan - do.

Sound, . . . for the captive's dream of hope, the captive's dream is past! 'Twas a

dim. rall - en - tan - do.

gain, . . . for the captive's dream of hope is past! 'Twas a

dim. rall - en - tan - do.

trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the Paynim's tow'r, And a

trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the Paynim's tow'r, And a

trumpet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the Paynim's tow'r, And a

trum - pet's pealing sound, And the Knight look'd down from the Paynim's tow'r, And a

rall.

Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him wound.

rall.

Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him wound.

rall.

Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him wound.

rall.

Christian host in its pride and pow'r Thro' the pass beneath him wound.

rall.

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now-a-days, except by societies specially organised for the performance of his music. Judged, not by the date of his birth but by the character of his work, he seems an older master than Spenser, and very much older than Shakespere, whose plays are better known, more generally admired, and in the fullest sense more popular now than in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Bach's music was, by a curious fatality, destined to become suddenly antique. For about fifty years after his death, which took place in 1750, his works were lost sight of; and when, at the beginning of the present century, they were revived in various countries by various societies of musicians and amateurs, they had already almost as much as in the present day the stamp of age and of old world dignity upon them. The Handel tradition, on the other hand, has never been broken. Handel's Italian operas passed quickly enough out of memory; living, indeed, only as long as their composer in his character of manager and musical conductor was in a position to direct their representation in person. His oratorios had quite another history. He did not produce the greatest of them, the *Messiah*, until he was nearly sixty years of age. But the impression produced by this masterpiece, as by *Israel in Egypt* and by *Judas Maccabæus*, has never faded; and, when, in 1784—twenty-five years after the composer's death—the great Handel centenary was held at Westminster Abbey—(with a chorus and orchestra which would now be looked upon as small, but which for the end of the eighteenth century were numerous indeed)—Handel was relatively speaking as popular as he is now. His music, in 1784, was known comparatively only to a few. But then, as now, every Englishman who took an interest in music was specially interested in the music of Handel; and the celebration of 1784 had itself a marked effect in calling the attention of the extra-musical public to Handel's surpassing merits and of stamping him as our great national composer—not indeed in an ethnological sense, but in the sense in which Lulli was a French composer under Louis XIV., and Meyerbeer a French composer under Louis Philippe. Handel, indeed, was far more English than the Italian Lulli or the German Meyerbeer were French; this being proved by the thorough and complete popularity of his works in England, where they are known not only, as a matter of course, to musicians and students of music, but also—and equally as a matter of course—to all the factory hands who, in so many of our great manufacturing towns, form societies for the practice and public performance of Handel's works.

The life and circumstances of Handel offer a strange contrast to those of Bach. Handel belonged not only to an unmusical but to an anti-musical family; and the story is generally known of the shifts to which he was put of studying as a child the art which was to engross the attention of his whole life. Bach, on the other hand, belonged to a family of musicians. His progenitors, for several generations, together with many of their

collateral relatives, were musicians of high distinction; and it was in Bach—that is to say, John Sebastian Bach—that the genius of this musical house concentrated itself. John Sebastian, like other members of his family, had musical descendants. But they could not approach him as he approached and surpassed all his predecessors; and though there was a member of the great Bach family alive at Berlin only some thirty or forty years ago, this modern Bach enjoyed no fame as a musician. The glory of the Bachs as a living race died out in fact when, in 1750, John Sebastian ceased to be.

If music is a civilizing influence, the Bach family, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, must have been greatly influential in maintaining the civilization of Germany—especially at a time when, through the demoralizing effects of the Thirty Years' War, the country seemed in many respects lapsing into barbarism. From generation to generation the Bachs continued to cultivate music, and they must be supposed to have pursued their studies in a kindred spirit, for, living all of them in Thuringia, they were in the habit of meeting periodically and of performing at these family conclaves such works as any or all of them had recently composed. The Bachs of the sixteenth, and of the early part of the seventeenth century, seem to have lived in order that, in 1685, John Sebastian might be born and that throughout his life he might exhibit concentrated in himself all such talents as before him had been distributed among various members of his family. In his youth, John Sebastian studied instrumental music apparently to the exclusion of all other. But while still pursuing instrumental methods he soon learned to write admirable works for voices; and to those who now study his music he is as well known by his compositions for voices and instruments as by any other. If this statement admits of an exception it must be made in favour of Bach's organ and pianoforte music which, as before said, is known, at least by a few familiar examples, to all frequenters of the best concerts.

To the composers of Europe Bach is probably better known than Handel. But in England, where Handel passed the best part of his life and where he was actually domiciled for half a century, the enthusiasm felt for the works of Bach cannot, the number of the faithful being taken into account, be compared to that which is felt for the works of Handel. Accordingly, while the Bach bi-centenary has been commemorated chiefly by a special performance at one of the concerts of the Bach Society, that of Handel will be celebrated at the Crystal Palace, where the Handel Festival, due, according to the triennial computation, in 1886, will, by anticipation, be given this year. It is to be regretted that the directors of the Crystal Palace do not see their way to a special festival in honour of Bach. But in default of a performance on the grand Handelian scale, Mr. Manns has already performed representative works by Bach at one of the Saturday Concerts.

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

THE Philharmonic Society is entering upon better times. Its directors can point to a large guarantee fund raised without difficulty, and, counterbalancing this, a purchase of subscription tickets ample enough to render the financial success of the season comparatively safe. Taking the artistic aspect of the improvement, Sir Arthur Sullivan's appointment to the post of conductor has already proved a decided hit—not merely an easy reform upon the Quixotic quintuple arrangement of last year, but an important acquisition of strength in the person of a popular musician, who, if not a born *chef-d'orchestre*, shows by present results that he can drill into the right shape the splendid material at his disposal. A famous *virtuoso*, speaking the other day about the Philharmonic Society's conductors under whose direction he has played concertos for forty years or more, referred to the varied shades of command exercised by different musicians over their forces. He had found the obedience essential for a perfect *rappor*t obtained by exactly opposite means, for example, in the case of Sir Michael Costa by rigid discipline, and in that of Sir Sterndale Bennett by absolute sympathy. Sir Arthur Sullivan, he thought, combined both qualities, and with distinct advantage. It has, in point of fact, been made evident that the new conductor enjoys the entire respect and confidence of his men. Proof of this was forthcoming at the opening Concert in an admirable performance of the symphony in F by Brahms and an even finer one of the Beethoven violin concerto with Herr Joachim as the soloist. Again at the second Concert (on the 12th ult.) a high degree of excellence was attained in Beethoven's B flat symphony, No. 4, and Schumann's pianoforte concerto, the solo in the latter ably sustained by Mr. Oscar Beringer. Included in the scheme of this Concert was a "Dramatic Overture" by Gustav Ernest, the prize work in a competition arranged by the Society and the selected of no fewer than eighty-eight overtures. Played under its composer's direction, the work gained a very favourable reception; indeed the attitude of the audience could not have been more encouraging had the fortunate competitor been a born Englishman instead of a German, resident nine months in this country. As to the merits of Herr Ernest's overture, enough that they reveal a certain facility in handling the orchestra and tolerable knowledge of effect; of genuine dramatic feeling, inventive faculty, and the art of concise construction we can discover little sign. Notice of the third Philharmonic Concert must be reserved.

By the time this number of THE LUTE is in the hands of its readers, another season of "Pops" will have come to a termination. The concluding Concerts have been well-nigh as uneventful as the earlier portion of the series, which, taken altogether, could perhaps take rank as the least productive of novelties Mr. Chappell has yet given. But, if barren in this respect, the Concerts have unquestionably been up to their old mark in every other. Herr Joachim has, as usual, lent lustre to the last six weeks, and Signor Bottesini's welcome appearance—his *début*, in fact, at the "Pops"—gave rise to a display of enthusiasm such as *habitués* rarely indulge in. Miss Agnes Zimmermann, Mr. Max Pauer, and, more recently, Mdlle. Clotilde Kleeberg have been the pianists; the vocalists have been excellent, and, after this, nothing remains to be said. Among the other chamber-music performances of the month should be mentioned the three given at Prince's Hall by the "Heckmann Quartet," whose skilful playing and remarkable

perfection of ensemble made a vivid impression. Turning for a moment to oratorios, we may record performances of *The Rose of Sharon*, at the Bow and Bromley Institute and at St. James's Hall, each marked by a higher measure of excellence than Mr. Mackenzie's successful work had previously been vouchsafed in the metropolis. This was especially discernible on the latter occasion, which acquired a new interest from Madame Albani's delightful rendering of the Sulamite's music—alike a veritable revelation and an unalloyed triumph.

A GERMAN contemporary publishes the following account of the genesis of Mendelssohn's four-part song "Wer hat dich, du schoener Wald," which has for many years past been a stock favourite and chronic joy to German Maennergesangvereine and English Choral Unions. It would appear that during the summer of 1842 Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy was staying at Soden—a watering-place in the Taunus hills—where his wife was undergoing a course of special treatment. From this place he was in the habit of making excursions three or four times a week into the so-called "Switzerland of Nassau," a singularly picturesque portion of the famous Taunus region, with his intimate friend Franz Messer, the musical director of the Frankfort Opera-house. One day they happened to walk to Eppstein, where they found the local authorities arranging some sort of a celebration in connection with the completion of a new organ, which had just been set up in the Protestant church at that place. One of the Eppstein big-wigs recognised Mendelssohn and Messer, and presently a deputation waited upon them at the inn where they were refreshing the inner man, to entreat that they would immortalize the new instrument by playing upon it during the inaugural ceremony. They did so, to the delight of all present. Mendelssohn extemporised with the luxuriant inventiveness that was always at his command, and, amongst other *motivi* that suggested themselves to his fertile brain in the course of his improvisation, was that of "Wer hat dich." As the friends were walking back towards Soden later in the afternoon, this particular theme kept "trotting" in Mendelssohn's head; and when they reached Hofheim, on their homeward way, he insisted upon stopping at the "Crown" inn, where he knew there was a piano, in order to play it over and note it down—in fact, to make sure that he should not forget it. The "Crown," as we are informed, is still kept by Hans Fach, who was its landlord forty-three years ago, when Mendelssohn was in the habit of using the house; and the worthy old Boniface is inordinately proud of his "Mendelssohn-Klavier," which stands where it did when the inimitable Felix played upon its keys on the occasion above referred to. The piano is become infirm and tinkly; but it is an object of great respect throughout the Taunus district, and old Fach says that he would not exchange it for "a Bechstein of silver with a golden keyboard."

IMMEDIATELY after the third performance of *Tristan and Isolde* at the Royal Opera House in Munich—namely, on the 19th of June, 1865—Richard Wagner addressed the following characteristic letter to the members of the Bavarian Court Orchestra. This interesting document has quite recently found its way into print for the first time. "Honoured gentlemen, my very worthy friends,—It is out of the question that on this day, after the third, and, for the present, last performance of *Tristan*, I should part from you without addressing to you a few last words of gratitude. In truth, no

artist can ever have been animated by a more exhilarating feeling than that which I have experienced throughout my relations with you. Even a mother, rejoicing in the child to which she has given birth with anguish, cannot feel the exquisite satisfaction which pervades my being when I hear the score that has so long lain dumb before me, resounding in my ears with such a warm and rapturous tone-life as you have breathed into it by your marvellously beautiful performance. To attempt, by any praise of mine, the recognition of the inimitable importance of your feat would only be to break in rudely upon your own splendid consciousness of merit. You all know what a feat it has been, and what it means, as far as you yourselves are concerned; your hearts must tell you what you have become to me, through this performance. You must know that I feel as a personal friend towards each one of you; for nothing short of the most hearty reciprocal friendship could have inspired you with the warmth, passion, and tenderness with which you have revealed my work, nobly and expressively, to the world at large. The hours of our rehearsals in common cleave to my memory as the most agreeable and encouraging of my whole life; the days and years that we, perhaps, are destined to spend together in the future shall bear witness to the exalted significance of those hours of commune. As long as I shall breathe and have my being it will be the inmost vocation of my heart to prove to you how dearly I love you, and how entirely thankful I feel towards you.—Always your faithful and devoted friend, Richard Wagner." The above letter can scarcely fail to be a surprise to those—and they are many, both in England and Germany—who entertain the conviction that Wagner was constitutionally incapable of any feeling akin to gratitude.

WRITING upon the subject of celebrated instrumentalists, "from a social point of view," an eminent Viennese musical feuilletonist has recently produced a series of amusing sketches, from which we extract the following paragraphs relating to Rubinstein, Gruenfeld and Sarasate:—"Rubinstein, as a player, is visible to his admirers in three aspects; the 'formal-pathetic,' as he sits down to his instrument, in the concert room, clad in full evening dress, with a dozen or so of miniature decorations displayed upon his broad chest; the 'comfortable,' in dressing-gown and slippers, when he is in his own sanctum, composing or practising; and the 'conventional,' as he appears in private drawing-rooms at evening parties. . . . He dislikes official receptions, at which he feels himself 'on show,' and nothing annoys him more violently than to be trotted round as a *haute nouveauté*. One night, after an experience of this latter description at Vienna, he dropped into a café which he was in the habit of frequenting late at night, looking so dishevelled that one of his friends asked him why his hair was so rumpled and his white choker all awry. 'No wonder,' he replied; 'to-night I have not only been handed round, but carved into slices.' In the houses of his intimate friends he prefers playing at cards to playing on the piano. Although generally abrupt and somewhat overbearing in manner he can, when it pleases him, be as courtly as a Lord High Chamberlain. For instance, if he happens to be placed next to an extremely pretty woman at table, the taciturn, frowning lion at once becomes talkative and smiling. If permitted to smoke a cigarette between the courses, his amiability knows no bounds and there is nothing his fair neighbour can ask him that he will not grant.

Indeed, Rubinstein without his cigarette is an impossible creature—the vision of a distracted brain. There is only one person living who can keep him from smoking Turkish tobacco; his venerable mother. When, at any of his Concerts in the Russian capital, he happens to play a few wrong notes, being out of health or temper, it is not his audience, or even the critics, of whom he stands in dread, but the old lady in question (she is nearly eighty) who scolds him with a wealth of highly-flavoured invective until he shakes in his shoes. No matter who may be present, she bullies him to her heart's content, the while he stands speechless before her, hanging his head like a shame-stricken and repentant child."

"ALFRED GRUENFELD'S motto appears to be, 'Art is serious, but Life is gay.' No other living virtuoso is so skilful in combining the dignity of an artist with the liveliness of what ladies call an 'agreeable rattle.' Where other pianists are tiresome he is amusing; where they torture themselves and their hearers in the agonising effort to keep the latter awake, he stimulates his audience to unrelaxing attention, and never fails to entertain as well as interest them. He takes care to provide for his own recreation, moreover, as well as that of others; for he is always to be found installed near the prettiest woman or best bottle of wine in any company he frequents, and, when these gifts of the gods have warmed his heart, his lips overflow with an inexhaustible stream of anecdotes, drolleries and original bon-mots. . . . Sarasate, the sallow Southerner, is enthusiastic and dreamy. Hence—apart from the charm exercised upon them by his marvellous playing—the deep interest taken in him by ladies of all ages, complexions, and dispositions. He makes a tremendous impression upon them by the lurking fire that gleams in his eyes, the grave frown that slightly contracts his brows, a certain sad solemnity of manner and a perplexing reserve in his demeanour towards the sex. In society, unless it be composed of quite intimate friends, Sarasate at first always appears rather stiff and constrained; after a while, however, his countenance clears and his closed lips open to give vent to most excellent talk. Once started in conversation, he is very reluctant to break it off, especially if his interlocutor be an interlocutress of more than ordinary personal attractions. He is given to expressing indifference to his own performances rather pointedly. Only the other day a lady was telling him, *avec expansion*, how greatly entertained she had been at one of his late Concerts in Vienna. 'Is it possible?' exclaimed Sarasate; 'I can never make out how that can be, for my playing is painfully tiresome to me, and I always bore myself intolerably at my Concerts.' His enthusiasm for Richard Wagner is something amazing in an artist born and reared in the sunny South. He recently observed to the writer of these lines: 'I can hardly bear to listen to any operas but those of Wagner; and, wherever I may be, if one of them be performed, I never fail to be present. My good luck with the *Meistersinger* has been really beyond belief during the past few weeks; I have been fortunate enough to hear it played in six different cities, one after the other!'"

THERE is a sensible editor in New York. When some one suggested a statue of the late Dr. Damrosch, he replied, "The monuments which will best keep green the memory of the lamented musician are the organizations which he founded."

FROM THE PROVINCES.

—O—

BIRMINGHAM.—Keeping "the best wine until the last," Messrs. Harrison, whose series of four Concerts form always a considerable feature in the annual musical doings of the "Hardware village," gave us for the fourth and final instalment of their subscription, an Orchestral Concert, at which Mr. Charles Hallé's band appeared. With a keen eye to the closer connection between Dvorák and Birmingham which may be expected from his position on the Festival scheme, the *entrepreneurs* were wise in their day and generation in playing the Czeck musician as a leading card. Dvorák to be exploited, what better choice could there be than his symphony in D, which, up to date had travelled no nearer Birmingham than Worcester. As to the performance, given such executants charged with the duty, the result—a good presentation—goes without the saying. Perhaps the greatest tribute to the work was the exemplary interest bestowed upon its several sections by an audience which, as a rule, is not particularly attracted by purely orchestral items. Madame Norman-Néruda was unable to be present, but fortunately a *locum tenens* was at hand in the person of Herr Joachim, and the vocalists were Miss Clara Samuells and Madame Patey. The former sang "Batti, batti" and "Voi che sapete," and the latter created quite a furore by her dramatic rendering of an excerpt from Ponchielli's *Gioconda*, "Voce di donna."—An excellent organization, the educational aims of which cannot be too highly commended, the Midland Institute Musical Section, gave a most enjoyable matinée on March 7th in the theatre of the spacious building in Paradise Street. Mr. Carrodus was solo violinist.—The same evening, the male voice choir of Saltley College supplied the concerted music for the Concert of the Musical Association to an audience of nearly two thousand, gathered together in the Town Hall. Gounod's *Messe des Orphéanistes* was the novelty, and its presentation was, in every respect, satisfactory. Gaul's *Lord Ullin's Daughter* was to have been included in the programme, but, from shortness of notice, was relegated to a Concert later on in the season. Miss Clara Surgey, Mr. Aynsley Cook and Mr. Byewater were vocalists, and Mr. Stimpson, as usual, was a tower of strength with the organ.—Being a pretty constant visitor at the Festival rehearsals, I can testify to the assiduity of the chorus-master and his zealous choristers in their work. Dvorák's *Spectre Bride* is fairly under weigh, and the choir being more *an fait* with his peculiar vocal formulation, rapid strides are to be noted on each successive Mondays' practises. Dr. Bridge's motet, *Jesus. pro me per-foratur*, has been received with flying colours.—Mr. Sims Reeves appeared on the 19th at a miscellaneous Concert at the Town Hall. Miss Annie Marriott, Miss Hope Glenn, Mr. Ivor McKay, Signor Foli, Signor Bisaccia, Miss Nellie Carpenter and Mr. Sidney Naylor were also "billed" for the event. All honoured their liabilities except Signor Foli, who, although present in the town, was unable to appear from a sudden attack of hoarseness. Mr. Reeves very kindly volunteered an extra song, and Mr. Ivor McKay did likewise, so that the *hiatus* was as far as possible filled up.

CARDIFF.—An excellent Concert, the object of which was to defray the cost of some additions to the organ at Charles Street Congregational Church, was held at that place of worship on the 4th March. Selections of a very admirable character were given from the works of the great

masters by the choir, and among the vocalists were Miss Clara Rees, Miss Astle, Miss K. Smith, Miss Jarvis, Mr. Woolridge, Mr. E. W. Waite, Mr. Sydney Jones, &c. The choir was led by Mr. Sidney Fifoot, and the organ accompaniments were played by Mr. J. E. Deacon.—On the same evening a choral festival of an interesting nature was held at Pembroke Terrace Calvinistic Chapel, Rev. J. M. Jones presiding. The conductor was Dr. Griffiths, Aberdare. The attendance was large.—At Roath Congregational Church a Concert was also given in aid of the organ fund. Several glees were rendered by the Roath Orphans' Society. Among those who rendered good service were Misses Nellie Atkinson, Louie Clarke, Blanche Cride, Mrs. Henry, Messrs. T. Evans, Rogers, Noote and T. John.

GLASGOW.—On the 17th ult., Mr. A. C. Mackenzie's new oratorio, *The Rose of Sharon*, was produced in St. Andrew's Hall, and for the first time in Scotland. The work was brought out under the auspices of the "Glasgow Tonic Sol-Fa Choral Society," an organization which did credit to itself in so promptly recognizing the success of a fellow-countryman in the highest form of the musical art. But enterprise is no new symbol of the faith within the body of choristers just named. In days gone by, for example, they opened, hitherto unworked, Handelian veins, and local amateurs gained thereby no mean fresh experience of the old Saxon master. Details need not be named here, our immediate business calling only for one or two jottings on the Scotch composer's great work, and the fate it met with on the occasion under notice. There is not much difficulty in accounting for the enthusiasm which greeted *The Rose of Sharon* at the last Norwich Festival. Diverse views may and do, indeed, obtain as to the proper title of the work. "But, what's in a name," &c., &c. It is to our thinking of little importance whether the composition is dubbed an opera or an oratorio. Enough that the compiler of the text and the composer have given to the world a work which cannot fail to rank amongst the foremost triumphs of modern times. The libretto—the prologue and epilogue, by the way, seem superfluous adjuncts—is singularly attractive, alike on account of the reading which has been followed, and the elegant and poetic treatment of the love story. Touching the musical exposition of the familiar subject, there was but one opinion, hereabouts, as to its artistic significance and worth. Comparisons were almost unavoidable, and to those who know the contents of say, *Unaloma*, the remarkably fresh departure in the mode of writing for the voices at once arrested attention. It is not needful to discuss at this hour the eminently vocal type of melody which runs through the oratorio. This characteristic is a distinct gain—*malgré* the tenets of the "advanced" folks. The members of the brotherhood have, however, been provided for on a liberal scale, and, in the employment of the *Leitmotif*, Mr. Mackenzie has been signally successful. The device has been utilised to legitimate purpose, and, amongst other happy examples, the theme which has been wedded to the words, "My Beloved is mine," stands out as something unique in its way. The work for the violins attracted prominent notice, so also the skilful and artistic method in which the composer deals with the brass contingent of the orchestra. But the whole of the instrumentation is, indeed, fascinating; and the couple of movements, "Spring morning in Lebanon," and "Sleep"—heard at a recent Choral Union Concert—again won warm applause. With praiseworthy liberality the management had retained the

services of thoroughly competent soloists. Those were Mrs. Hutchinson—whose refined method lent fresh charm to the music of the *Sulamite*; Miss Hope Glenn, Mr. Edward Lloyd, and Mr. Watkin Mills. The popular tenor has, possibly never been heard to better advantage, and his opening air—with its beauteous passages for the harp and solo violin—was simply superb. Miss Glenn sang with all her wonted ease, and the new bass gained for himself many friends on his first appearance before a Glasgow audience. The band was brought together from various quarters, and though not by any means a model of accurate and refined playing, yet Mr. Smyth, and his coadjutors gave, in all circumstances, a wonderfully good account of the instrumentation. Further rehearsal would have been of advantage to the chorus. They were not invariably in tune, and the nuances were not, at all times, well cared for. One or two numbers were, however, sung with rousing effect, and, notably the bright and vigorous chorus, "God save the King." Mr. W. M. Miller conducted, and Dr. Peace presided at the organ.—What was described as "the latest and greatest operatic success of the day," was produced at the Royalty Theatre, on the 16th inst. *Falka*, sure enough, on the opening night, drew to the Sauchiehall Street house a very large and highly-pleased audience. The music is not particularly striking or original, but, on the other hand, the smart libretto made a distinct hit. An excellent company, which includes Messrs. Horace Lingard, Grey, Wright, and Marnock, Mdles. Gladys, Cramer and Wadman, did the work ample justice, and the opera was placed on the stage with great good taste.—A well-devised programme was forthcoming at the Concert given in Hillhead Parish Church, on the 16th ult. For some years Mr. Robertson Strong has wrought diligently and well in the interests of the "Ladies' Choir" in connection with the church, and on this occasion his efforts on behalf of good music failed not to again secure very frank approval. The selections from Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* were prominent examples of good choir-singing, and, amongst other interesting items, Schubert's chorus, "God in Nature," received thoroughly musician-like treatment.—The Promenade Concerts at the "Fine Art Institute" continue, and with marked success. On the Monday evenings, chamber-music is discoursed, and by such competent executants as Mr. W. H. Cole, Mr. Daly, and Mr. Watton. Mdle. Hetta Lipmann has also been heard, and the young and clever pianist has had every reason to be gratified at her reception.—Some agreeable music will invariably be found in the programme submitted by the band of the "Lanarkshire Engineer Corps," a body of musicians which has lately come to the front. Their Promenade Concerts take place in St. Andrew's Hall, and on alternate Saturdays. The performances, under the experienced baton of Lieutenant Cole, have, generally speaking, been excellent examples of what a good military band can achieve, where the executants are each and all intelligent musicians. Amongst the solo players, Mr. Green, the leading clarinet player, is a valuable acquisition.

LIVERPOOL.—In accordance with long-established custom, during Lent, the Concerts of the Philharmonic Society are entirely sacred, and, as the eleventh of the series, Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ*, and Cherubini's fourth Mass in C, were given. The first-named work, which has not previously been heard here, excited an unusual amount of attention. Messrs. Santley, Hilton, and Lloyd, with Miss Ferrara, were the soloists, and their efficiency goes without saying. The chorus of the Society,

who have come in for a considerable amount of adverse criticism of late, did much to retrieve themselves, both in Berlioz's trilogy and in the mass.—The usual free performance of the *Messiah*, on Good Friday will be given in St. George's Hall, under the auspices of the Philharmonic Society. Miss Dora Schirmacher's pianoforte recital at St. George's Hall was an artistic triumph, and the accomplished young lady has evidently gained in power and intensity during her Continental tour.

MANCHESTER.—This season will be memorable, if ever the history of Mr. Hallé's concerts should be written, as the one of first-time performances. During the last month, among such may be mentioned Wagner's Overture to *Faust*, Mozart's *Serenade in D major*, No. 9; Haydn's *Grand Symphony in C*, entitled "L'Ours," and a duet for two violins by Spohr in G minor, the last played by Madame Norman-Néruda and Herr Joachim with great effect.—Mr. de Jong's Concerts are now over for the season, and he closed a very successful campaign by his Benefit Concert on the 28th of February, when an immense number of his friends and admirers assembled. Miss Eleanor Rees appeared at this Concert.—A visit from Madame Essipoff to the Gentlemen's Concerts is the only novelty to be mentioned.—We have had more than our share of English Opera this season. A month at one theatre, three weeks at another, and now we have Mr. Carl Rosa at the Theatre Royal, and a company, comprising Madame Cave-Ashton, Miss Annie Poole, in *The Grand Duchess*, at the Comedy. The only novelty Mr. Carl Rosa has introduced this visit is Bolto's *Mefistofele*, which was performed with immense success, both as regards performance and audience, on the 6th ult.—Sir Julius Benedict conducted *The Grand Duchess* on Monday, the 2nd inst., and also played two solos between the first and second acts.—Richter is to give a Concert here next month, and his advanced guard is doing everything to make it a success.

[THE Editor will be obliged to Conductors or Secretaries of Musical Societies if they will kindly send programmes and notes of Concerts for insertion in THE LUTE.]

FROM THE CONTINENT.

BERLIN.—Here everything in the musical world is very quiet, owing to a paternal Government having as usual, directed that during Lent no music of any but a serious character may be performed. After Easter, however, we are promised that at Kroll's establishment Mdme. A. Joachim shall appear, and Edward Strauss' waltz orchestra has been retained for the 11th, 12th, and 13th of April. Herr Wülner, who has for a number of years conducted the performance of the Philharmonic Society, has taken his leave of the public, and, to judge from the number of wreaths and the unbounded applause offered to him on the occasion, his efforts to further the cause of music have not been unappreciated by the inhabitants of the German capital.

BRUSSELS.—Wagner's *Meistersinger* was given at the Monnaie Theatre, before a packed house. The Queen, Duke of Flanders, and a large number of distinguished personages of all classes of society were present, and it is generally admitted that the result was a perfect success. The French papers also speak of the performance in the highest terms of praise, and confess that it will now be impossible to confine the great modern German composer any longer merely to the

concert-room. It is said that Wagner himself expressed himself on one occasion thus:—"I have no fear for the French; they will, in the end, appreciate me more than the Germans," and this utterance seems now likely to be fulfilled.

FLORENCE.—A lady has not only composed a long opera, but also assisted at the rehearsals, and finally conducted the orchestra during the first performance. This occurred in Florence, in the Salvini Theatre, three weeks ago. Mme. Irene Morpurgo, who was born in Egypt, composed the three-act opera of *Maria*, and, on its first production, swung the director's bâton with all the precision and energy of a practised *chef d'orchestre*. She had the pleasure of being called upon to repeat several of the parts, and at the end of the performance she was called forward no less than sixteen times to receive the congratulations of the audience.—At the Theatre Della Pergola, Baron Pasca's new opera, *Bianca*, was received with an enthusiasm that is somewhat unusual even in Italy; but on the return of the composer to his home in Noto, a town in Sicily, he met with an almost royal reception. The Syndico, accompanied by a large number of the principal inhabitants of the town, went out, preceded by a band of music, to meet him and present him with golden medals and wreaths of laurel; as he entered the town, which was gaily decorated to welcome him, he was almost buried beneath the flowers which were showered upon him, and finally, when he had reached the shelter of his own house, he was obliged to appear on the balcony, again and again, in response to the plaudits of the assembled multitudes of his townspeople.

LEIPZIG.—Not unnaturally, all Germany, and therefore more especially its great musical centre, has during the present month been doing honour to the bi-centenary anniversaries of the births of the two great German composers of church music. Handel is partially claimed by England, as owing to his lengthened domicile in that country, he must have become to a very great extent imbued with English feeling; but Bach was essentially and thoroughly German. The directors of the new concert house here did not take any special notice of the 23rd February, the 200th anniversary of the day on which Handel was born in Halle: moreover it is a somewhat remarkable fact that although in England the 100th anniversary of Handel's anniversary was celebrated—first erroneously in 1784, and again a second time in 1785—the occasion was marked in no special manner in Germany. On the other hand, the 100th anniversary of Bach's birth was celebrated here in 1785 by the performance of his Passion music, and again this year the 12th ult. was selected for a special extra concert, at which the programme consisted exclusively of works by these two great composers.

PARIS.—Whereas, hardly a twelvemonth ago, the courts decided it would not be without danger to the public peace to allow Wagner's works to be performed—so great was the antipathy to anything German—now German music is heard everywhere. Still, this assertion must be taken with a certain amount of reservation. For instance, *Fidelio* is, after a lapse of twenty-five years, to be given again at the Grand Opera, with new scenery and all accessories needful to ensure success. But, as an opera without a ballet cannot find favour with the Parisians, Messager's *Les Deux Colombes* is to be introduced as a ballet. This may suit Parisian taste; but what would Beethoven have

said to such a proceeding?—A subsidy of 256,000 francs has been voted for the Conservatoire, which now numbers 377 male and 293 female pupils. How advantageous the working of this institution is for the stage, may be judged from the fact that at the Comédie Française 43 members of the *troupe*, and at the Odéon 30 members were formerly pupils of this school of music.

STOCKHOLM.—The first representation of the opera *Neaga*, libretto by Carmen Sylva (Queen of Roumania), music by Ivar Hallstrom, was given in the Grand Theatre. The *mise en scene* was excellent, the costumes were historically correct and the decorations of the first and fourth acts were thoroughly suitable; whilst the cast had been so arranged as to include the best performers available. The music is written in a popular style and contains a number of catching melodies. In every act there are interesting airs; the solos do not call for any overstraining of the voice and the *ensembles* have a good deal of power, besides being rhythmically *piquantes*. The best number of the work is a duet in the fourth act. Having said thus much it is hardly necessary to add that the performance was a success.

VIENNA.—A blind violinist has made his appearance before the footlights, who, at the age of ten years, has mastered the art of playing on his difficult instrument to an extent which seems wonderful in one so young. Otto Steinberger, for that is his name, is the son of parents in very indigent circumstances. When only 16 months old he lost his eyesight from an attack of small-pox; this deprivation seems, however, to have developed in an unusual manner the love of music which was in him, for when still quite an infant he begged his father, who could play the violin a little, to instruct him also how to play and, on his wish being granted, with that certainty of touch that often astonishes us in the blind, he rapidly learnt the position of the different notes. At the age of six years he was admitted into the State Asylum for the Blind, where he was taught to read and write; his teachers soon discovered that the boy not only had extraordinary musical talents but also a wonderfully retentive musical memory. A long and difficult concerto required only to be played over once or twice on the piano in his hearing, to enable him to repeat it without a mistake on the violin, and that too with a beauty and purity of tone that was truly astonishing. On the occasion of his first public appearance in Vienna, he played seven long concertos, and when called upon for an encore, gave a kind of Hungarian rhapsody of his own composing.

It was the intention of Mr. W. J. Winch to return hither for the London season, but owing to an important engagement with Mr. Theodore Thomas, he will not come to England till July or August.

AN operatic mystery! Cherubino declares, in the *Figaro*, the existence of an anonymous person by whom is contemplated a season of Italian opera at Covent Garden! Who can this Curtius be?

It seems to be a fact that the showmen at the "Inventories" will run a series of foreign bands during the season. Yet the people at the Royal College of Music hold that we are a musical nation! How is that?

THE announcements of American travelling companies have to be taken, in winter, with the shipping proviso, "Weather permitting." Recently, at Chicago, the Damrosch opera troupe were snowed up, and the curtain rose, on the opening night, two hours after time.

REVIEWS.

PATEY AND WILLIS.

Hornpipe. Characteristic Sketch. For the Pianoforte. By Allan Macbeth.

A LIVELY little piece, well and pleasingly written. It is carefully fingered, and will form a useful and entertaining exercise for young pupils.

Ruby. Gavotte. For the Pianoforte. By Frank Lawson.

AN agreeable imitation of the old dance form, and in some respects superior to the majority of similar compositions now before the public.

Peggy o' Yarmouth Town. Song. Words by M. Ingle Ball. Music by Frederick Bevan.

A TUNEFUL ditty in praise of a sailor's sweetheart, which will delight admirers of the style made so popular by Mr. Stephen Adams in his "Nancy Lee."

Young England. Song. Words by Arthur Chapman. Music by Frederick Bevan.

THIS song is excellent of its kind, and contains some effective contrasts. The music is simple, and suited to a contralto voice.

Twenty Short and Easy Voluntaries for the Organ, with Pedal Obligato. Arranged by Dr. Spark.

IN this collection organists will find many general favourites, such as "Lascia ch'io pianga," Mendelssohn's airs, "Jerusalem" and "But the Lord is mindful," "Verdi prati," Gounod's "Benedictus" from the Messe Solennelle, and the Adagio from Beethoven's Pathetic Sonata. All have been arranged by Dr. Spark with a view to performers of moderate capacity; the pedal obligato being especially simple. The collection thus meets a considerable want, and will prove extremely useful.

STANLEY LUCAS, WEBER AND CO.

Two Sketches. For the Pianoforte. No. I. *Rondino-Scherzando in F.* No. II. *Novelletta in C.* By C. W. F. Crowther.

THESE are two pieces of superior merit, well adapted for educational purposes. No. I. affords some good practice in part playing, and both compositions will improve the taste as well as the execution of young performers.

Prithee, Madame. Words by Claxson Bellamy. Music by Frederick Rivenhall.

To dainty verses containing sage advice to a coquette, Mr. Rivenhall has wedded music as dainty. The result is charming.

W. J. WILLCOCKS AND CO.

The Victoria Cross. Song and Chorus. Words by Druid Grayl. Music by Walter Stokes.

A MANLY and spirited composition which cannot fail to become popular. Copies have, we understand, been presented to and graciously accepted by the Queen.

Out on the Sea. Boating Song. Words by Druid Grayl. Music by Walter Stokes.

It is not entirely original this song is graceful and pleasing, and easy to sing and play.

WOOD AND CO.

Marche Romaine. For Piano. By Edward Redhead. A CHARACTERISTIC little piece, not difficult, and in its way effective.

The Marionette's Ball. Sketch. For the Pianoforte. By J. C. Beazley, R.A.M.

THIS little sketch is not without merit, and the composer

indicates with more or less success the stiff and angular movements of the dancing dolls.

Hush! the Night Draws On. Part Song for Four Male Voices. Composed by Robert E. Earnshaw.

THIS is a successful effort, the music being well conceived, well written, and expressive, yet without strain for effect, or any affectation. Male-voice choirs should take note.

Wood and Co.'s Organ Library, containing a Series of Original Voluntaries. Edited by Walter Spinney. (No. 6.)

IN the present number of this interesting series we have a March by Dr. John Naylor; a Soft Voluntary by Frank Spinney; a Rhapsodie (why the word in French?) by Dr. J. W. Hinton; and a March by the Editor. All the compositions possess merit, and are adapted for general use, rather than for a few experts. This is the distinguishing feature of the entire series, for which we desire good luck.

ERNEST KÖHLER AND SON (Edinburgh).

The Harmonium: How to use it. By J. Grieve, Harmonium Instructor at the Watt Institution, Edinburgh.

THIS is one of the most comprehensive and useful books of its kind we have seen for a long time. It conveys a great deal of musical knowledge, and as regards the harmonium, is quite exhaustive. Nothing better could possibly be desired by those who are learning the instrument without a master. These students are led on step by step, and always told the Why and the Wherefore of what they are enjoined to do. The book has our heartiest recommendation.

C. JEFFERYS.

Over the Sea our Gallies went. Chorus for Male Voices. Words by Robert Browning. Music by Ethel Harraden.

EXCELLENT purpose and considerable merit are apparent in the music of this piece. Miss Harraden, however, has somewhat departed from the elementary and fundamental rules of vocal part-writing. Her passages, in consequence, are, here and there, not vocal, seeming, indeed, to have been picked out on a keyboard, where, of course, they are easy enough. We would suggest the limitation of her next attempt in such a degree and manner as study of the best models would show to be advisable. That counsel taken, Miss Harraden's music would, we fancy, have real value. She has ideas, and ideas still count for something.

LONDON MUSIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.

Arrangements for the Organ. By W. J. Westbrook, Mus. Doc., Cantab.

TWELVE numbers of this collection are before us, and, from their character, we can only desire that Dr. Westbrook may go on till the total be twelve times twelve. The contents are varied, and representative of many styles, but all can claim a classic origin, and, what is more to the purpose, actual value. The possessor of the series, in point of fact, is the owner of a little library of choice music arranged for the organ with skill and full knowledge of effect. The numbers are admirably engraved and printed, and the whole set is a credit alike to arranger and publisher.

CHAPPELL AND CO.

Gavotte. For the Piano. By Marie Antoinette Kingston.

THE work of a beginner, but bearing every sign of musicianly knowledge and feeling. In form it is graceful and unaffected.

POET'S CORNER.

CHARLOTTE HELEN SAINTON-DOLBY.

BURIED AT HIGHGATE, FEBRUARY 23RD, 1885.

SCATTER the flow'rs she loved so well,
 White blooms, with spring's soft odours rife;
 And let their silent beauty tell,
 How pure and sweet her life.

Even her wond'rous gifts above,
 Her virtues fill our minds to-day;
 And those who knew her but to love,
 Turn sorrow-bowed away.

The lips which sang so rich a strain,
 Spake ever but to cheer and bless;
 The hands which woke the charm again,
 Touched only to caress.

To countless hearts, fond mem'ry brings
 The pleasures of the bygone years;
 For oft on melody's soft wings,
 She led to higher spheres.

How parted grow the ranks of time,
 The pathway drear, the shadows long;
 May we, too, reach the fairer clime,
 The land of deathless song!

HAROLD WYNN.

At the time of going to press, the serious illness of Sir Julius Benedict continues, and is, we are sorry to say, regarded as well-nigh hopeless. Musicians everywhere await the issue with anxiety, and are naturally full of sympathy with the aged professor and his family.

AN American tenor lately sang, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," as an encore of "Robin Adair."

There is a society in Pittsburgh which questionably calls itself "The Shady Side Musical Association."

A LONDON correspondent states: "The Marchioness of Lorne has taken almost fiercely to the violoncello."

MR. VILLIERS STANFORD'S Birmingham work treats the story of the Three Holy Children. He should make something of this.

ACTUALLY, the first notice of the performance of *Manon* at Liverpool appeared in the New York *Herald* on the following (Sunday) morning.

DR. FRANZ HUEFFER has resigned his appointment as writer of the historical and analytical notes in the concert-books of the Philharmonic Society.

MR. WALTER DAMROSCH is carrying on the work left unfinished by his deceased father. American critics speak very kindly of him, as, under the circumstances is natural. He has vacated his appointment as organist of Mr. Beecher's Church.

FREDERIC ARCHER describes Liszt's *St. Elizabeth* in the *Keynote*, as "a mere rhapsodical piece of eccentricity, the lack of real musical worth being but indifferently concealed beneath a mass of meretricious and showy instrumentation." We shall not appeal against this judgment.

MR. J. F. BARNETT has just published, at Augener's, an excellent pianoforte sonata. It will probably be heard next season at the Popular Concerts.

RUBINSTEIN will come to London for the purpose of conducting his oratorio, *Paradise Lost*—provided anybody can be found to stand the monetary racket.

THE English glee, homeless since the closing of "Evans's," has found a refuge at the Criterion, where it aids the digestion of three-and-sixpenny diners.

BERLIOZ has a German rival. We hear from Leipsic of a *Missa Solennis* "for sixteen solo voices and four quartet choruses." The constructor is Eduard Grell.

HANS VON BÜLOW is an eccentric gentleman, but not wholly wanting in shrewdness. He is said to intend visiting London this season—provided Rubinstein does not do the same.

THERE is a glee club in connection with New York's famous Seventh Regiment. Our own Artists' Corps of Volunteers boasts a kindred association. Why are they not more plentiful?

THE report that burglars robbed M^{me}. Schumann of her late husband's musical MSS., letters, &c., is denied. Their appreciation, we are now told, did not run beyond silver plate.

WILHELMJ, it is said, has cried off his bargain with the Philharmonic Society, and declines visiting London. We can do without him, but his behaviour, if as reported, is none the less unworthy.

ANTONIN DVORÁK has chosen a "death's head and crossbones" subject for his Birmingham Cantata. We are sorry for it. Music enough has been devoted to such themes as the *Spectre's Bride*.

A PHILADELPHIA paper contributes the following to the literature of "Yankee Doodle":—"From the best theories that can be formed it is probable that 'Yankee Doodle' first came from Holland. In the low countries of that kingdom there has long been a song which the harvesters sang, illustrating the fact that buttermilk and one-tenth of the grain they gathered was given as the price of their labour. It runs thus:—

"'Yanker diddel, doodel down,
 Didel, dudel lanter,
 Yanke viver, voover vovwn,
 Botermilk and Tanther.'"

The air to which these words were sung was afterwards carried to England and supplied to words written in derision of Cromwell, almost exactly as they are known in this country, and named 'Nankee Doodle.' The song was brought to this land soon after the landing of our forefathers, and was known as 'Lydia Fisher's Jig.' In 1775 the regular troops, while the Continental Congress was discussing the question of separating from the mother country, used to sing the air to such verses as these:—

"'Nan kee Doodle came to town,
 For to buy a firelock:
 We will tar and feather him,
 And so we will John Hancock.'"

It was not adopted by the Americans as a familiar air until after the battles of Concord and Lexington, when the brigade under Lord Percy marched out of Boston, playing by way of contempt, 'Lydia Fisher's Jig,' or what is now known as 'Yankee Doodle.'"